

Interview with Stephen H. Rogers

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR STEPHEN H. ROGERS

Interviewed by: Raymond C. Ewing

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Q: This interview with Ambassador Stephen H. Rogers is being conducted on behalf of the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program of the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training and I am Raymond C. Ewing. This session of the interview is taking place on Wednesday, July 27, 1994. Steve, I am glad to have the chance to talk with you today. It would be helpful if we could start the interview by talking a little bit about your early life and how you came to be interested in foreign affairs.

ROGERS: Thanks, Ray. I am pleased to participate in this program. That question comes up often about what got me into the Foreign Service. What interested me in joining the Foreign Service? I wonder if a lot of us didn't have sort of the same experience of growing up as teenagers in World War II when so much of our attention was on the world, a rather unhappy state for much of that time, until the middle of the forties. But I remember getting the maps of the Pacific and the Eastern Front in Europe and putting pins in the maps and doing all that sort of thing. I really think that contributed to an international focus for a generation of us, or a partial generation of us.

Q: It was an exciting time. Major events were taking place during the war, and of course right after the war too.

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ROGERS: That is the next point. From 1944-45, when there was planning for the post-war period and the building of the new institutions that have served us tremendously well the last fifty years on balance I think caught my imagination like many other people. The end of the war itself, the technological elements involved in the war, the building of the UN system, the GATT, NATO, the coming of the Cold War, all of these things, I found very interesting. I remember being quite interested in the United World Federalists. That was quite a movement in those days. It sounded very good to me, very idealistic obviously.

Q: One world.

ROGERS: One world, yes, that kind of thing. I should say also that I think my mother, in particular, had this kind of outlook, feeling sort of responsibility for being involved and trying to help, or at least understand global issues, etc. She got involved in the League of Women Voters and other groups with an international outlook.

Q: Where were you living during that period when you were in high school?

ROGERS: In 1940, when I was nine, we moved to Long Island, to Port Washington. So, we were east coast, near New York, and that contributed I am sure to a broader outlook.

Q: Not too far from Lake Success.

ROGERS: Not far at all from Lake Success, which is an interesting point. That is the area where I went to high school and graduated in 1948, Port Washington High School.

Q: Then you went up to Princeton University.

ROGERS: Yes. By the time I was applying for colleges, in 1947-48, I was really pretty sure that I wanted to go into the Foreign Service.

Q: That is unusual to have that clear a commitment at that age.

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ROGERS: I had begun to develop ideas about the Foreign Service without knowing anything about it, really. But that broad perspective was the kind of thing that I wanted to do. I remember hearing about George Kennan...he wrote his X article in 1947, I think. Whenever it was I remember being very impressed by that and by the fact that he was a Foreign Service career officer and he was having that kind of impact on the evolving international situation. That encouraged me.

Q: So you went to Princeton with the intention of preparing for the Foreign Service.

ROGERS: Yes. I applied to four or five different colleges, I guess. I don't even remember which ones. The way I got to Princeton was that I also applied for the Naval ROTC scholarship and got it for Princeton specifically. So that sort of ended any debate there might have been as to where I would go. I really didn't know much about Princeton then, but I did know it had a School of Public and International Affairs, the Woodrow Wilson School, so I was very pleased to go there. I did, in fact, graduate from the Woodrow Wilson School.

Q: You had a BA in public and international affairs. Then, of course, with the Navy ROTC scholarship, you were committed to go immediately into the Navy.

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: Where was your Navy service?

ROGERS: We had training sessions for six to seven weeks each summer and the first and third of those were at sea, but the second one was four weeks at Pensacola and two weeks at Little Creek so we could learn about Naval Air and then about Marines and amphibious operations. We had just arrived in Pensacola a couple of days before the Korean War broke out on June 25, 1950. That, of course, tended to focus our minds considerably because all of a sudden our expectation of graduating into a peacetime Navy changed somewhat, it became less certain. That changed the terms of our arrangements

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with the Navy. For instance, at that point the Navy decided I was committed to three years of active duty instead of two years of active duty. But I didn't object to that. It was a very good arrangement for me financially making it possible for me to go to Princeton.

Q: So you served three years on active duty?

ROGERS: Yes, three years on active duty on a destroyer in the Pacific. I got to see parts of the world I had never seen before.

Q: The Korean War was still going on but was tending to wind down by that time.

ROGERS: Yes. We sailed to the western Pacific and I think it was October, 1952, and participated in the Korean War in November, December and early 1953. We had missions to fire at North Korean bunkers, escort duty, etc., the kinds of things that destroyers do.

Q: You weren't tempted to make the Navy a career?

ROGERS: I thought about it at one point, but only in terms of intelligence. I thought it might be interesting to be in naval intelligence. But I didn't try to go in that direction.

Q: When did you take the Foreign Service examination?

ROGERS: Well, when I got out of the Navy, I needed a year or so to become a civilian again and figure out how I was going to pursue my goals. For those reasons, as much as anything, I went to Columbia for a year and studied economics. I had had courses at Princeton in economics and they quite fascinated me, so I was quite interested in studying more economics and that is what I did for a year. I took the Foreign Service exam at the end of 1955, during my first term at Columbia, and took the oral in March or April, 1956. During that year I also found my bride and we were married, June 23, 1956 and went off on our honeymoon. The Foreign Service got a hold of me while we were on our

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honeymoon and said, "Will you accept as of a certain date?" I said, "Yes, sure. I will be there."

Q: Did you meet your wife in New York?

ROGERS: At Columbia.

Q: Was the oral exam you took in 1956 the old style?

ROGERS: Just an interview, as far as I remember, for an hour or hour and a half. There was a panel of three people.

Q: In New York or in Washington?

ROGERS: I think it was in New York, but I couldn't swear to that.

Q: I don't think that was the so-called old style of exam that went on for several days. It was what I took also in 1957, a year later. I think it was considerably easier for us than for our predecessors.

ROGERS: And successors. I think it was about an hour and a half. Was that about what you had?

Q: I think closer to an hour.

ROGERS: Yes, something like that. I remember it was actually a lot of fun. I read a short history of the United States the night before being pretty sure there would be emphasis on that.

Q: One thing I remember doing for mine was carefully reading the Los Angeles Times the morning of the exam. That was discussing the situation in Jordan, as I recall. So, when did you actually enter into the Foreign Service?

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ROGERS: It was in July, 1956.

Q: Very soon after your honeymoon.

ROGERS: That is right. Our honeymoon was a week; that was all we could afford. We were anxious to get to Washington. My wife had by that time gotten a job teaching in Fairfax County. It was very quick, so much quicker than for so many people since who wait around for a year or two.

Q: When you entered on duty in the Department of State you had the usual initial training course at the Foreign Service Institute and your first assignment was in Washington.

ROGERS: Yes. When I got there it was just too late for one class so I spent a month in Personnel, as often happened, and then started in August, 1956 the first six weeks of the A-100 course.

Q: This is the junior officer-training course at the Foreign Service Institute?

ROGERS: Right. It is still the A-100 course all this time later. And then I was assigned...I really wasn't asked, they found out I had studied economics and they said, "Okay, that is what we need at this point." You will remember that when you entered that this was a time of the expansion of the economic activities of the Foreign Service and this was closely connected with Wristonization and saw a whole change in the career structure of the State Department and the Foreign Service.

Q: So your assignment to the Bureau of Economic Affairs was to take advantage of your economic training and experience?

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: It wasn't because your wife had a teaching job in the area?

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ROGERS: No.

Q: You were given no choice.

ROGERS: You will also recall that we pretty much were told what we did and we did it.

Q: What part of the Economic Bureau did you work in?

ROGERS: In what was then called the trade agreements division, in the commercial policy branch, which later became a division, itself, I think.

Q: How long were you there?

ROGERS: Two years.

Q: What sort of work responsibilities did you have?

ROGERS: Well, it was trade issues. It was GATT work. I attended the 12th session of the contracting parties of GATT in 1957 in Geneva. So it was that kind of thing. Specific trade issues, often with Canada. The role of GATT, our participation in the GATT. I did position papers for GATT sessions, and all that kind of thing.

Q: And, at that time the Department of State played a very lead role in trade negotiations. It was before the creation of the Office of the Special Representative for Trade—STR.

ROGERS: Right. As I mentioned, it was Wristonization time, so I was put into an office which traditionally had been largely civil service. In fact, the director of the office, Carl Corse, and the deputy director, Len Weiss, were both civil service people. Under pressure of Wristonization, Len became a Foreign Service officer, but Carl did not. I worked for Herm Barger and then Joe Greenwald in the commercial policy branch.

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That was, I think, a fairly tough introduction to the Foreign Service. These old timers, Corse and Weiss, had pretty high standards for both substance and presentation. I was told early on it is best not to have a whole lot of pride of authorship because I wasn't going to recognize what came out at the other end. They did redraft a great deal, probably too much. But they had very high standards and that was good preparation for my career.

Q: Well, they had high standards and expected a lot from their staff. It was a difficult time for them too, because some of them were being forced into the Foreign Service fairly late in their working careers. You stayed there for two years and then went to your first Foreign Service assignment where?

ROGERS: I had to go back and finish the A-100 course. Remember at that time they sometimes split it. So I went back to the second six-week portion and learned about consular matters, which I had absolutely nothing to do with anytime since.

As I remember I told the Foreign Service that I didn't mind where they sent me, but I would rather not go to India because it was hot, sticky, crowded and there was disease, etc. So in April, 1959, we left for New Delhi and spent a little over two years in the embassy there in the economic section. We enjoyed it immensely. It was a very exciting experience.

Q: Who was the ambassador there at that time?

ROGERS: It was Ellsworth Bunker. I always think about him when we talk about the difference between career and non-career ambassadors. He was as close to a career ambassador as you can come without being one. He had five or six different missions in his time with the State Department. I had tremendous respect for him. I had a certain amount of contact with him, not a great deal of contact, but enough to see him in action and develop respect for his integrity, his sensitivity to the Indian scene, etc. It was a little bit difficult for us at that point in India for various reasons.

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Then John Kenneth Galbraith replaced him about two months before we left New Delhi, so I got to know him a little bit.

Q: That was at the beginning of the Kennedy administration in 1961. You were the junior officer in the economic section and did a range of reporting?

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: And commercial work also?

ROGERS: No, not as such. It was economic issues and economic reporting, a certain amount of contacts, a certain amount of travel to see how the economy was coming. It was the time when Nehru was the prime minister and he believed very firmly in building a base of heavy industry. Of course, we had some problem with that approach, but it went ahead without our assistance. He got his assistance from the Russians and to some extent the British and the French and others. But we pretty much stayed out of these major heavy industry projects because we disagreed in principle to the approach.

Q: We had some assistance programs of our own at the time, didn't we?

ROGERS: Oh, we had very substantial programs. We had a very large mission, TCM, Technical Cooperation Mission. My recollection is it was agriculture, education and that kind of thing. But I don't remember it in great detail. But, a very important part of our program was PL 480. While we were there we signed a very large agreement for PL 480 grains for India with the expectation that this would cover the time until India could be self-sufficient. Well, it took far longer, I take it. I haven't been back to India since 1961. It took far longer than we had anticipated, but finally it seems to have happened, and that is good.

Q: This is a period not long after partition and independence for India and Pakistan, but before the next major war between them in 1965. Did you travel to Pakistan?

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ROGERS: No. We were certainly aware of the tensions and the history and all, but we could not, as I recall, we certainly did not, cross the border on land. Flying in we flew from Karachi, so there was that link at least.

While I was there the main focus of concern was on China. There was an incursion by the Chinese into Ladakh in the north and there was a certain amount of fighting there, which I take it sounded far worse back here than it did to us sitting in New Delhi. But still, it was a matter of concern. The Chinese were building their embassy very close to ours in the new diplomatic enclave, Chanakyapuri, and they stopped work on it. Things became quite tense.

Q: Had our new embassy been completed during the time you were there?

ROGERS: The chancery, yes, but the residence not.

Q: The architect for the chancery was Edward Durell Stone.

ROGERS: Right. I liked that building. It had been opened for just three months when we got there. I thought it was beautiful and enjoyed it. A lot of people didn't care for it because it was an open rectangle and you had to walk around the courtyard to get somebody from the economic section over to the political section or other parts of the embassy. I thought it was a magnificent building and was very pleased with it.

Q: Did your wife teach in New Delhi?

ROGERS: She did. There was an American school. She taught about half time because we had a little girl by that time.

Q: Born in New Delhi?

ROGERS: No, she was five or six months old when we went to New Delhi. So Kent could teach...she wasn't really asked, she was sort of told that they needed her. She taught in

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what was called the old Taj Barracks, which had very high ceiling and pretty surroundings. But she loved it because she could do anything she wanted in her room. There was lots of wall space way up if she wanted to put things on and nobody cared about whether there was going to be a little sticky stuff left over and that kind of thing. So she enjoyed teaching there.

Q: You were there in New Delhi for two years and where did you go next? This would have been what year?

ROGERS: We left in June or July, 1961. Again as part of beefing up the economic function in the State Department I was given the opportunity to study economics for a further year and went to Harvard for that purpose. I spent the year 1961-62 at the Graduate School of Public Administration, which later became the Kennedy School. I got a masters in public administration. That isn't why the Department sent us there—to get a degree—and they weren't all that enthusiastic about it, but it came easily with the work I was supposed to do. Essentially all of my course work was in economics. It was the toughest economics I have ever done.

Q: It was a very rigorous program. I went a few years later. In 1961-62 I would have thought that quite a few of the Harvard economic professors were in Washington in the Kennedy administration or serving somewhere else, like Galbraith.

ROGERS: Kissinger was there and I sat in on a few sessions of his seminar in national security, with Mort Halperin, incidentally, his assistant. But there were some outstanding figures in economics who were still there. Quite enough to keep me occupied very thoroughly for that year.

Q: So you finished at Harvard with your masters degree in 1962 and then what happened?

ROGERS: Then I went to the embassy in Paris.

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Q: Did you already have French or did you go to French language training?

ROGERS: I had French in high school and at Columbia. In fact Kent and I met at the French House at Columbia, so we had that link also to French. But I had studied French at the Foreign Service Institute, I don't recall for how long, during our first tour in Washington. It was a very good program, as you know. FSI always has had very good language programs.

Q: It is always much better when you can start with a good foundation, which it sounds like you had than starting totally from scratch because often the length of training is not as long as it should be.

ROGERS: The important part was conversation at FSI. I had the grammar and a certain amount of vocabulary. Conversation was not part of high school French in those days.

Q: Unfortunately that is still the case in many schools. But the FSI does give you a chance to develop your ability to use the language in everyday settings.

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: In Paris you were again an economic officer. What sort of responsibilities did you have?

ROGERS: Well, I worked in the part of the economic section that was headed by the Treasury Attaché, Don McGrew, a person who is still remembered who was there in the embassy maybe 20 years. He had been there 12 or 13 when I got there and he stayed many years later. Don knew French and knew the French and knew France very well. He never lost his Toledo accent in French, but he was very effective, had good contacts, very skeptical of what the French were doing a good deal of the time. He never became Frenchified, never lost his sense of US interests and the objectivity of dealing with the French. But that also was a good experience, working on financial matters, economic analysis and some specific issues.

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Q: The Treasury Attach#s office was part of the economic section?

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: And particularly responsible for macro economic reporting, financial analysis, monetary matters?

ROGERS: Yes. And for AID. For the first year I was there a large part of my responsibility was for our liaison with the French Ministry of Cooperation and others on aid matters in Africa, which was quite interesting. It got me to Africa on one occasion for a conference of the ambassadors and AID mission directors from the French speaking countries in Africa. There was an interesting issue there that might be worth discussing. It was a question...You know, we all know, that France has maintained very close official and commercial relations with most of its former colonies in Africa, and the question that we had and seemed relevant to how we treated the French on aid matters in Africa was whether these programs were essentially for the benefit of France or essentially for the benefit of the African countries. There were some in our missions in Africa who felt that much of French aid, or most of it, was self-serving and should not be recognized as aid in the same, more objective sense, that our aid was thought of anyway. Now we all know that all aid programs are self-interest as well as in the interest of the recipients at their best. But this became quite a debate and I wrote quite a long telegram on the subject making the point that whatever the motivations were, whatever the returns to France were, these programs certainly seemed from my vantage point to be providing resources in teachers, in administrative help, in trade credits and in all sorts of ways that had to be beneficial to the receiving countries. It was paternalistic, there was no question it was and I would guess still is. But I argued that these were real aid programs in that sense. And that telegram became something of a subject of discussion at this conference I went to in 1963 which was held in Lagos.

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Q: So that was still quite early in the independence of the former French colonies. Many became independent in 1960-61.

ROGERS: That is true. From this perspective, it seems as if it was immediately after. At that time I wasn't thinking of it in terms of it being quite so new. And the French relationship with those countries had been established...I think Guinea had gone its own way, I think the others had fallen into line, with the relationship that the French accepted.

Q: They were getting the advantage of the flow and transfer of technology as well as money, those countries that were continuing to cooperate and have a good relationship with Paris.

ROGERS: Right. The French certainly sent hundreds, probably thousands, of teachers, in particular, to these countries, or kept them there when they became independent.

Q: Of course, soldiers as well and businessmen.

ROGERS: Yes. I think the French had never denied that they feel that they have a special relationship and occasionally special responsibilities and even authorities in these countries. We have seen that.

Q: We have seen that many times, not just in former French colonies, but in...

ROGERS: They have expanded a little bit in recent months. Personally, I think we can be rather pleased that they are willing to take on that responsibility.

Q: They also have a great deal of expertise and knowledge of the countries. They are not coming in as total neophytes.

ROGERS: Right. So, that in any case, was a large part of my responsibilities in the first year I was there. It became important enough that AID had decided it had to have their

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own man there, so they sent Denis Baron, a fine AID officer, out there to serve that purpose. So in my second year in Paris I was working on other issues.

One thing we, the Kennedy enthusiasm and energy had an impact on us, specifically in the AID area. There was something called the Middle Level Manpower Conference. The administration had decided that the problem in development was very much focused on developing the capabilities of middle level managers. We got instructions to press the French to send a high level delegate to this conference, which was to be held, I think, in Puerto Rico. It was just the kind of thing where cultures clash—the enthusiasm and idealism of this approach, “get something done; do something dramatic, quickly at a high level”—and the French resisted. They couldn't see sending a minister or anybody at that level to this conference. We had phone calls from high level people in the White House on weekends and everything to try to get the French to send someone. They finally sent a Mr. Boisdevant. Mr. Boisdevant, I guess, was a good man, but he was not a minister and did not serve the political purpose that we were looking for.

So there were issues like that, that I got involved in that were interesting.

Q: You did some of the reporting about the French economy?

ROGERS: Yes. It was fairly routine. Whatever the Weekly Economic Reports were at that time, that kind of thing. We did that all around the world, I guess, at that time.

Q: It was a fairly early period in the new Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD, and, of course, the European Community was moving along. Were you involved with either of those organizations?

ROGERS: Not at that point. If I could go back a little. In TAD, the Trade Agreement Division, we were very much involved in the GATT and how to absorb the creation of the European Economic Community. And that was a major issue of the 12th session of the

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contracting parties that I went to. But in Paris, I don't recall that I had very much to do with either of those organizations.

Q: But, your next assignment brought you into contact with both of them.

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: You finished in Paris when?

ROGERS: In 1964 we returned to Washington and I went to RPE in the Bureau for European Affairs—the Office of Regional Political Economic Affairs...what does it say on the sheet?

Q: Office of OECD, European Community and Atlantic Political Economic Affairs.

ROGERS: Yes, that is right. I guess there had been a single regional office and it was broken into two parts and the people wanted to make sure that the political element was in that one too, so it became Political-Economic...

Q: The other office, RPM, was in the Bureau of Economics...

ROGERS: No, it was in the Bureau for European Affairs and was political military as opposed to political economic.

Q: What sort of responsibilities did you have in RPE? You were there for quite a while, did your responsibilities changed during that time?

ROGERS: They did, I was there for five years. At first it was exclusively on OECD matters and I worked for Ruth Phillips. She was the officer in charge of OECD affairs. I was working on the trade committee, agriculture committee, and I don't recall which other committees I was particularly working on. And then there was a reorganization. Deane Hinton had been the director of the office, and when he left he was succeeded by Abe

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Katz and Abe decided it was time to reorganize things a bit. He created a small unit consisting of me and two other officers to look at substantive matters across the board within RPE's responsibilities, meaning the OECD side but also the European Community side and the economic aspects of NATO. So we were concerned with all three of the organizations and to a minor extent with the ECE (Economic Commission for Europe at the UN) and things like that. Our responsibilities were substantive—trade and agriculture and science.

Q: Of the trade side, this must have been about 1966-67, the Kennedy administration was in process of negotiation, STR had been established, the Economic Bureau where you had served before was very much involved. How did you and the European Bureau interact with all of those other actors in Washington, not to mention, Treasury and Commerce and Agriculture Departments, etc.?

ROGERS: That was tough bureaucracy at that point. You know about that from your own experience. We sometimes saw things quite differently from the way people in EB did and had some pretty difficult discussions with the people there. Julius Katz was a tenacious battler and I had tremendous respect for him, but I wasn't always able to get through to him issues that came up or with his people.

Q: It was a time when a lot was going on in Europe. Integration was well along with six countries in the European union at that point. Expansion was not a major issue or was it? I guess British membership was always an issue during that period.

ROGERS: Well, it was a question as to whether, and I would have to review the history of the thing, but certainly the idea of expansion was in the air. The British had opted out and by that time they had been rebuffed on the European defense community, I don't know exactly the year of that, but there was a lot of tension across the channel. So we were dealing with a Community of six countries.

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Q: I was in the European Bureau quite a while later when Arthur Hartman was Assistant Secretary, and I know that RPE and the political/economic dimension was of tremendous interest and importance to him. That hasn't always been the case, I don't think, on the part of the EUR Assistant Secretary. How was it at the time you were there?

ROGERS: When I arrived in RPE, there was still an almost crusading philosophy in favor of European integration. People were dedicated to the importance of it, for good reason. People remembering the war and the importance of integrating Germany into a new structure and make sure that things didn't go wrong in those relationships. And it was ideological, or it came across as being ideological, in favor of European integration. That changed over the five years I was in RPE as people moved out and new people came in. People were looking at the downside from our point of view in trade terms, etc. The common agricultural policy became a very serious concern of ours for a very good reason. So, it became more of a kind of pragmatic approach. Within RPE we still had people who had this intense devotion to the idea of European unity. We all believed in it. The question was to what extent you allow them leeway in meeting GATT requirements and other norms of international economic behavior in the creation of this very important EEC.

Q: It was also a time when the Agriculture Department with soybean exports and some of the other agencies became much more interested, involved and concerned about the trade damaging potential effects of the EEC.

ROGERS: That's right.

Q: So you were in RPE for five years. That must have been one of your longer assignments.

ROGERS: Yes, there were personal reasons why I was pleased to stay there for those five years. We had come back from Paris with one child and a few months later we had another and two years after that we had two more. So, we thought it was a good time to

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let those kids grow up at least a little bit before we went overseas again. So I was pleased to stay there for five years, and the work changed, my responsibilities changed and the direction of the office changed.

Q: Well, you were certainly dealing with some very important substantive issues, and different issues over that period of time. I often have found that simply the movement from one assignment to another is obviously a big transition, but an equally big and sometimes even more difficult transition is when you have a new boss or other changes within your unit. You don't need to move to have a major change.

ROGERS: You are absolutely right about that.

Q: So at the end of your time at RPE it looks like you took a year off and went to the Industrial College of the Armed Forces.

ROGERS: Right. I was offered senior training. I didn't particularly choose the Industrial College, but that is where they sent me, and we were pleased to spend another year in Washington instead of going somewhere else for a year. That was a good experience. The substance of it was largely useful but far from all of it was of direct interest to the Foreign Service. But the process of working in an environment that was 75 percent military, or close to that, and watching this being a joint Defense Department institution, watching the different services getting to know each other, that also was very interesting.

Q: That period, 1969-70, of course, was also a period of great stress at the national level with Vietnam, the invasion of Cambodia taking place while you were at Ft. McNair. I don't know if that had much reverberation among the student body?

ROGERS: We certainly debated Vietnam and we found that people in the military covered the spectrum in views about Vietnam. I mean there were people who were not bomb throwing anti-war activists but who felt very strongly that we should get out, that we should

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not be there. And there were many, of course, who thought we had a job to do there and should continue it until we finished it. So that was an issue.

Q: At the end of that training then you have what looks like another good assignment. You went as counselor for economic affairs in London?

ROGERS: Yes. One other thing that was interesting about ICAF was the international trip we took. I went with a group that spent a week in Argentina and a week in Chile. That was quite an eye opening experience. Argentina was not democratic, but was very neat, orderly and seemed secure. And then to spend a week in Chile at the time of the campaigning for the election that resulted in Mr. Allende's becoming president was really quite fascinating. Things were disorderly with political slogans painted on walls and streets. You got a feeling of great political, democratic vitality in Chile. A freshness in a rather disorderly way that you didn't see in Argentina. It was my introduction to Latin America and it served me well later.

Then I went to London where I was the number two in the economic section. Stan Cleveland was the minister for economic affairs, and I was his deputy and the head of a section that included quite a wide variety of different economic relationships of about ten or twelve people and different aspects including one person who spent all of his time on commodity trade because of the commodity institutions that were centered in London. We had a civil air attach#, a maritime person, trade people, quite a variety.

Q: All of those people were in the unit which you headed?

ROGERS: Yes. They were responsible to me.

Q: That included British relations with Common Market and some of the other regional issues as well as the specific air and commodities issues?

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ROGERS: That's right. Several of the people in my section were from different agencies in Washington. So I had only a couple of just plain Foreign Service officers, generalists.

Q: What sort of things did you, yourself, specially work on?

ROGERS: The question of British entry into the Common Market was an issue for discussion in much of that period. We had trade issues, we had maritime issues, we had civil air issues.

Q: Meanwhile, you and your family now consisted of your wife and four children and enjoyed living in London, I assume.

ROGERS: We enjoyed London very much. We lived in a house built about 1815 on Edwardes Square just off Kensington High Street, one of maybe 80 row houses around this very pleasant two or three acre fenced in square for the residences. A lot of charm. There was a certain amount of inconvenience associated with that charm, but it was very nice. We enjoyed London very much.

Q: Who was ambassador during that period?

ROGERS: It was Walter Annenberg.

Q: This was during the Nixon administration.

ROGERS: Yes.

Q: And the DCM?

ROGERS: It was Jerry Greene (Joseph N. Greene, Jr.), who didn't stay very long. He left and Earl Soames came and replaced him.

Q: Your tour finished about 1972 and you went back to Paris.

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ROGERS: Back to Paris and the OECD mission this time.

Q: Had the mission been there during your previous assignment in Paris?

ROGERS: Yes. I had very little to do with it at that point. I can't say that I was very enthusiastic about going to the OECD mission. Joe Greenwald was there at the time I arrived but left about a month later to become Ambassador to the European Communities. As a matter of fact we didn't have an ambassador for two years and the acting chief of mission was the Treasury representative, Weir Brown, who had been there for many years and knew the business. I acted as his deputy for that time. At the end of two years the administration finally got around to replacing Joe with a businessman from Arizona, named Bill Turner. He was a very nice fellow, but was new to the business and it wasn't easy for him to get a hold of this very technical organization, so they sent Abe Katz to be his deputy. Weir Brown left at that point. So the third year I was under Bill Turner and Abe Katz.

Q: And then Weir Brown, who had come from the Treasury was replaced by another Treasury man?

ROGERS: Yes, but not at as high a rank within the structure.

Q: That was Ralph Korp wasn't it?

ROGERS: I think it was.

Q: He came from Rome.

ROGERS: Yes. Jim Ammerman was there then too. We had two Treasury people all the time.

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Q: While you were acting deputy, what other responsibilities did you have or was it all coordination of the mission?

ROGERS: Well, it was partly that, partly personnel matters and coordination of Mission activities, but with special responsibilities for the trade committee, the energy committees, the manpower and social affairs committees. I did not have responsibility for the financial side of the OECD, the Economic Policy Committee and Working Party III, which were under the Treasury person there. But much of the rest...agriculture for most of the time I was there was part of my responsibility.

Q: I spent part of that period in Bern and I was spending a fair amount of time on something called the Executive Committee in Special Session which was where high level trade economic policy officials come together in fairly quiet ways periodically. Did you work with that?

ROGERS: Yes. That was a limited group. It wasn't all countries. I was there at the time that structure was set up.

Q: The OECD has been there a long time and still does good macro economic research, studies, coordination of AID programs. How would you assess the OECD, particularly looking at the period when you were there, but more generally both before and later?

ROGERS: I had had some background, of course, in my time in RPE, so I knew something about it. I think anyone who has had experience with international organizations knows enough not to jump at the chance of going back to such environments because there is so much talk and so much paper. But I also feel strongly that the OECD is a necessary organization. It serves to deal with some pretty basic problems in international economic and scientific and other relations. It isn't a very exciting place and that is probably an advantage in dealing with these difficult subjects in a technically competent way. I can think of two or three examples, perhaps.

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One is the issue that was brought up in Europe about US technological domination of the world—the technological gap. This had become a major political issue for some people. We were able to put that into the Committee on Science Policy in the OECD and deal with it through a series of specific studies on different areas to see what the situation was and to see whether in fact there was damage to the Europeans of the sort that would require some kind of action which presumably we would not like. I think that somewhat depoliticized the issue and controlled it. That worked quite well.

Q: Another aspect that I think is interesting about the OECD is the inclusion of Japan at a fairly early time. I think the OECD was the first regional grouping that Japan became a member of after the Second World War. The willingness of the Europeans, I think with strong American leadership, to have Japan be a part of the OECD was very much appreciated in Tokyo. I don't know if you had any experience with the Japanese at OECD or any reflections about the expansion of the OECD beyond Europe?

ROGERS: Well, it certainly was an interesting development when the European countries started expanding to Australia and New Zealand and then Japan. It made it the premier organization of developed countries on economic matters. I think the expansion was obviously necessary, to include Japan. Everything since then has shown that it was absolutely right. I don't recall that the Japanese took great leadership at my time there, but they did become active. They had people in the Secretariat and wanted to be active in that fashion.

There was another issue that I should mention that came up then, an issue with which I also had quite a bit to do with in RPE, and that was energy, the oil crisis.

Q: The oil crisis was about 1973.

ROGERS: It was the end of 1973 when OPEC announced that prices would rise. We thought it was a very big rise as of January 1, 1974. I say we thought it was a very big

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rise, but it went up a good deal more in 1979. The OECD was well placed to do a quick analysis of what the implications were of this great increase in the price of oil. Much of the month of December, 1973 was focused on this. It happened to be a time when Weir Brown was on a well-earned home leave so I was sitting in the Council for the US and was the principal high-level contact on these matters with the Secretariat and all. The Secretariat put out some analyses and policy papers that certainly impressed me at the time and as far as I can recall would still stand up well. They had to do with the implications for capital movements. They foresaw the massive transfer of capital to OPEC countries and the fact that this capital would have to be placed somewhere. Something would have to happen with it. This led through the years to tremendous lending through Western banking institutions during the critical times of the late seventies and eighties in the international balance of payments situation.

Q: Another thing that happened with strong OECD involvement as a result of the OPEC price increases was the establishment of the International Energy Agency.

ROGERS: Yes, that's right.

Q: Were you involved in that?

ROGERS: Yes. That happened in my third year there, or we were in the process of creating it then.

Q: Steve, let's break for today and pick up at this point at our next meeting.

ROGERS: Fine.

Q: Today is Thursday, August 4, 1994 and this is the second session of the interview with Ambassador Stephen H. Rogers which is being conducted on behalf of the Foreign Affairs Oral History Program of the Association for Diplomatic Studies. Steve, when we finished talking last week, you were talking about your experiences as counselor of the

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US delegation to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris where you worked in 1972-75. You were talking about how the International Energy Agency got started. I wonder if there is anything else that you particularly wanted to cover from that time in Paris?

ROGERS: The five years that I had in Europe, that is the two years in London and three years at the OECD mission in Paris, occurred at a good time to be there in the sense it was a time of economic change and a certain amount of crisis and many major issues. To go back to the London time, in August, 1971 when President Nixon took major economic steps to protect the US balance of payments including cutting the tie to gold and putting a surcharge on US imports, it caused a good deal of consternation in Europe and in Britain in particular. Then going through the rise in the oil price on the first of January, 1974, that I think we mentioned before. And, in this period also, the negotiations for Britain's entry into the Common Market, which raised issues and heightened issues in our minds, in particular about agriculture, but about other things too. So this was a time of tension, uncertainty and change. In some senses it showed the importance of the OECD, the fact that we had something like that in existence, well supported with a secretariat that was excellent in some fields, including fields of most importance here. I remember that following the announcement, late in 1973, by the OPEC countries of the increase in the oil prices that would shortly go into effect, there was this flurry of activity in the OECD and the Secretariat through the Christmas period and all, to try and analyze what the significance of this would be and the analysis, which I think I mentioned last time, seems to have held up as having been quite valid.

One concern that the Secretariat and the Organization expressed in particular was that countries, especially the developed companies, the oil importing countries that were most impacted by this rise in price of oil, would react in protectionist ways. So, the organization developed a trade pledge, that is a pledge that committed the countries not to take

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protectionist actions as a reaction to the rise in the price of oil. And that was something we worked on significantly, both in the development of the pledge and then in its renewal later.

Q: Was it initially for one year?

ROGERS: My recollection is that it was for one year. I remember the discussions of renewal while I was there too, so I suppose that means it was one year in each case.

Q: I have been reading a book called "The Cold War, A History," and one of the points it makes is that one of the good results, if you will, of the Cold War was a number of economic measures that served to strengthen and pull together the cohesion of the countries of the West. The OECD, obviously, was one of the important organs or institutions that brought together the industrial countries. Was that a theme or sentiment that you thought much about at the time you were there?

ROGERS: I think it was more something that we took for granted. I don't think it was explicit in our thinking. Rather the focus of our thinking tended to be protecting the continuing movement, the overall trend towards liberalization and opening up markets for goods and capital and all, against the rise in the price of oil. This was a period of adjusting to or toward a new international financial system, devaluation of the dollar in 1973, I guess it was.

Q: I think 1971 perhaps?

ROGERS: Well, there was August 15, 1971, but then in February, 1973 there was another action, and I can't remember just what it was, but it again disturbed people and we had to explain and defend the action. I mention that because looking through my notes I recall that I happened to be sitting in the Council of the OECD at that point and defending the action by the United States to our major trading partners.

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Q: I suppose in retrospect one would have wished that when a major action like that were taken that there had been prior consultation, discussion in an organ like the OECD with our major trading partners. But in some cases that wasn't feasible, wasn't possible, wasn't even thought of, and then it became an important task of explaining, justifying, defending what had already been done after the fact.

ROGERS: All that is true and a little embarrassing on occasion, but the United States was and remains a large economy and has perhaps different responsibilities and requirements than other countries because of that reason.

Q: There was also some disadvantage when you telegraphed your intentions by consulting, by discussing because that has an impact, obviously, for certain parties who are involved in the market.

ROGERS: It gives a field day to speculators, among other things.

Q: Well, in 1975 you returned once again to Washington to a very different part of the world and different kind of assignment.

ROGERS: Well, as I remember that was at the time when a policy was established by Secretary Kissinger ("GLOP") came into affect. He had decided that people who were well experienced and thoroughly familiar with one part of the world ought to go to another part of the world. He wanted to break up certain groupings, traditions, etc. to bring ideas and fresh light into various policies, including, perhaps particularly, that of Latin America. So I left Paris in 1975 to become the director of office of regional economic policy (ECP) in the Bureau of Inter-America Affairs, which was quite new to me. It wasn't entirely new in the sense that another theme that certainly was important to us at the OECD (and the OECD covers a tremendous range of interesting activities, very quietly for the most part), was the relationship between developed and developing countries. Of course, oil figured prominently in that context, but it was much broader than that. The whole world

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trade structure was important and the developing countries, of course, felt they were being disadvantaged by it. There were the problems of the multi-national corporations that acted, the developing countries thought, not necessarily in their interests and their connections abroad. So it was an interesting time to become involved in Latin American affairs.

Q: You were involved primarily in multilateral regional issues or also bilateral economic issues between the United States and Latin American countries?

ROGERS: We got somewhat involved in the bilateral issues, but it was more directed at those issues that extended to more than one country in Latin America. I remember we spent a lot of time working with other agencies and other parts of the department on the list of products that would be covered by the generalized scheme of preferences to try to make it as beneficial as possible within the context of US interests to Latin American countries.

Q: I don't suppose at that time there begun to be any consideration of what came after, much later, involving Mexico?

ROGERS: Right. To jump a head a little bit about that. That certainly came up in my next assignment when I was in Mexico. That was at the time of the second big oil price hike in 1979. Mexico didn't exactly discover it had oil at that point, because it had been a major oil producer back in the 1930s which led up to the nationalization of the oil industry, but rather there was new public recognition that Mexico had huge reserves of oil that had not yet been exploited. That hadn't been widely discussed publicly partly because they were of recent discovery in their magnitude and partly as a matter of policy because of the concern of what knowledge of such oil supplies would do in the domestic political scene. But we can come back to the NAFTA business later.

Q: Okay, let's go back to your time in ARA. That was at the end of the Ford administration and the beginning of the Carter administration. Certainly the Carter administration in terms

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of Latin American policy stood for human rights, democracy. I don't know how important economic and trade issues were.

ROGERS: Human rights and democracy were not particularly our responsibility in RPE. Of course, there was always fall out from things such as Deputy Secretary Christopher's mission to Brazil on the nuclear question, and we had to take this into account in looking at other policies. But basically it continued to be matters of trade and development and trying to reconcile our interests. We had issues of trade in meat that some of the Latin American countries were quite concerned about.

To go back again, continuing when Secretary Kissinger was running things, Latin America wasn't very high on the list of his priorities, for understandable reasons. That is not a criticism. But he did get involved, including I recall a meeting of the OAS General Assembly in Santiago at one point when he wanted to make a real statement showing our interest in Latin America. I recall working on the speech that he gave there, at length in Washington and then rewriting and adding to it up to the last minute in Santiago a kind of agenda of policies to assist Latin America and respond to their concerns.

Q: Did Secretary Kissinger give that speech?

ROGERS: He certainly did. He insisted on strengthening it and beefing it up.

Q: You were part of the delegation?

ROGERS: Yes. That was a function of ECP, to help backstop the delegation to the OAS, as well as to the Economic Commission for Latin America. At an earlier time I headed the US technical delegation to an ECLA conference in Guatemala. So I had a fair amount of contact of that sort with Latin Americans.

Q: How large a staff did you have in ECP?

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ROGERS: Six or seven people or so. It was not a huge staff.

Q: Did you work closely with the Economic Bureau of the State Department as well as other agencies?

ROGERS: Sometimes in conflict, but we did our best to work with them.

Q: And then after that, in 1978 you went to Mexico City as counselor for economic affairs. We talked briefly about what later became the North Atlantic Free Trade Area. I assume that you were primarily involved with trade issues in Mexico, or other issues as well?

ROGERS: It was trade, energy, environment, transport, communications, a whole range of different aspects of the relationship. You know the expression “Pobre Mexico. Tan lejos del Dios, tan cerca de Los Estados Unidos,” “So far from God and so close to the United States.” That attitude was completely understandable. Mexico is so vulnerable to the United States if it chooses to see it that way, and if we choose to act in that way. Like Canada, it is in the position of sometimes being forgotten when we make our policy decisions and forget to realize to what a huge extent these two countries are economically dependent on the United States. So, I found a kind of understandable defensiveness on the part of the Mexicans on issues of all sorts where many of them felt we were taking advantage of them.

I guess the extreme case was when one of the prominent papers, I think it was Excelsior, at a time of drought in Mexico published a theoretically serious story about how they had discovered that this was the result of a US plot—that we by seeding clouds had made sure that the rain fell elsewhere and not in Mexico. But, as I say, this was understandable.

At the time that oil became such a factor, in the Mexican economy and in its political consciousness, the Mexicans both felt pride and hope and became protective of this wealth that they had. And when there were proposals in the US Congress at that point for a North American Free Trade Area, the Mexicans naturally reacted that this was an

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attempt by the United States to get a hold of Mexico's oil reserves. I don't know what the motivation of the proposers was, but one can assume that that was a factor in their thinking, that it would make it easier for the United States to buy oil from Mexico, also giving Mexico an assured market in the United States, and that became a factor later. But the Mexicans saw this kind of proposal as another attack on their sovereignty, or some Mexicans did.

Q: Did you find the feeling that perhaps the United States paid more attention, took more into account, its other neighbor Canada, perhaps because of its higher standard of living, more developed economy, perhaps even greater integration than Mexico?

ROGERS: One would think that Canada and Mexico might have found common interests in trying to deal with the United States and I seem to recall one or two occasions when there were contacts between the two governments of that sort. My impression is that the Mexicans consider themselves in such a different situation from Canada's that it was just hard to find any comparability there. I don't recall that there was any jealousy or resentment of our policy toward Canada. I don't think that was the situation. I think Mexico felt it was not relevant.

Q: In the period that you were in Mexico City, 1978-82, a lot of American investment was taking place, especially in the border region...assembling plants, etc. Was that a particular issue for you? Did you spend quite a bit of time up along the border?

ROGERS: Well, I can't say that I spent a lot of time up there, but certainly we were very conscious of this, and the Mexicans were very conscious of the positive aspects of the maquiladora phenomenon. The industry grew very fast and I take it it has continued to grow very fast since. I suppose NAFTA put it into a different context which decreases the value of the maquiladoras except the geographical location is still important. Maquiladoras could be in other parts of Mexico, but the great bulk of them were near the US border.

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Q: One other aspect perhaps of US-Mexican relations that I would like to touch on briefly. I know from my experience in dealing with Canada on a couple of different occasions, the issues are extremely concrete and specific and also involved domestic agencies of government which were perhaps not otherwise involved in international affairs...in environment and various aspects on the economic side. Did you find that was the case in Mexico too, and did other agencies try to interact directly with their counterparts in Mexico?

ROGERS: Fortunately, or unfortunately, the Mexicans speak Spanish and not English. But for other reasons too, there was much less of that with Mexico than with Canada. In fact, my recollection is that we tried to encourage this kind of contact on environmental matters for instance, to get the EPA involved with their counterparts in Mexico. We have so many problems that affect both countries along the border and the oceans on both sides.

Q: When you went to Mexico City it was still the Carter Administration and you stayed under 1982, which was the first two years of the Reagan Administration. Who was the ambassador when you first went there?

ROGERS: It was Governor Pat Lucey. This is an interesting matter. Governor Lucey was former Governor of Wisconsin and was a very, very pleasant man. He was a man not of Foreign Service experience, but still he did well. Then President Carter decided to appoint Julian Nava as ambassador. Ambassador Nava was from Los Angeles and had been on the school board there. He was the first American Ambassador of Hispanic, Latino descent to be sent to Mexico. I don't recall that the Mexicans were all that excited about having the first Latino American sent there. In any case his tour was cut quite short by the arrival of Mr. Reagan in the White House. President Reagan sent John Gavin down there, another Latino American, in that his mother was born and raised in Mexico. Ambassador Gavin was an interesting person who made quite an impact, quite quickly in the press. He had no fear of the press. Apparently he had had a lot of experience with it. I think he perhaps succeeded, whether immediately or not, President Reagan in the Screen Actors Guild. So

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he had a lot of experience with the press. He took on the press quite cleverly, sometimes against the advice of his counselors, and held his own very well. The press was tough on the United States there. But he had good humor, his Spanish was a very nice and fluent. I served under him for a year or so, or more. He was quite impressive.

Q: There is a very large American community, of course, in Mexico. I assume there is a large chamber of commerce. Did you interact to a certain extent with that or with the American business community?

ROGERS: Yes. I was an honorary member of the board of the American Chamber and saw American businessmen often. There were issues, certainly, that we tried to help on. It is a very large community spread over a good deal of Mexico.

Q: How were the relations during that period between the embassy in Mexico City and the State Department in Washington, especially in the economic area?

ROGERS: Through most of the time I was there, they went quite well. The last year or so, things got a little tense. There were differences. The fact that Ambassador Gavin was close to President Reagan probably was a factor in that, but I wouldn't want to speculate just how that impacted. But it was the classic case of an ambassador with access that backstoppers in Washington didn't have in the same way. This had an impact on our relations with the Office of Mexican Affairs.

One other thing about Mexico. Mexico was fascinating for a variety of reasons. I won't go into the historical and cultural reasons, but they are deep. It is a far more interesting country than I think most Americans give it credit for being. But during that period from 1978-82 that I was there as economic counselor—I take neither pride or responsibility in the fact—it was a time of the rise and fall of the Mexican economy. When I got there in 1978 it was coming out of a serious depression. President Lopez Portillo was considered as having the right kinds of attitudes toward business, the economy, inflation, etc. Then the whole oil matter impacted on the economy, so Mexico had a period of growth and

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prosperity for a couple of years which seemed quite impressive. But in that time, oil rapidly became too dominant a factor. It was a sad thing to watch because the Mexicans knew what was happening, or many did. They had seen what happened in Venezuela, where the ability to export oil crowded out so much economic activity, including feeding themselves. This same sort of thing happened in Mexico, where oil became the great majority of Mexico's exports to the detriment of other parts of its own economy. And then the price of oil declined in the early eighties and by 1982 there was an oil glut. This had tremendous impact. A few months before I left the first crisis devaluation of the Mexican peso took place, and then things just got worse and fell apart. This became a sort of sparkplug for tremendous attention given to the problems of developing countries and their balance of payments in Washington.

Q: Was Mexico a member of OPEC?

ROGERS: Mexico is not a member of OPEC, but coordinated with OPEC and, of course, took advantage of OPEC's decisions to some extent.

Q: You weren't there later on, but as the Mexican economy became less dependent on its reliance on oil, it industrialized towards an almost developed country economy. I believe only recently Mexico has joined the OECD.

ROGERS: Well, to someone with my background in Mexico fifteen years ago, the recent events there are hard to believe. From the time that Mexico had this resentment towards the United States and defensiveness, for it to have agreed to the North American Free Trade arrangement, is just astounding and I think a very positive development. And I am not thinking just of the economic side, but as a reflection of a kind of maturity in the political relationship between Mexico and the United States. From my background in the Economic Bureau and my European experience, I am a little bit concerned about the development of regional economic blocs, unless there is some overwhelming economic, or more likely political, reason for it. But I think in this case the political reason was obvious.

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And the importance of Mexico's economic development to the United States is also obvious in terms of our illegal immigration problem and all. And now, as you mentioned, Mexico has joined the OECD and that is extraordinary.

Q: There have been some very significant developments in the last twelve years since you left.

ROGERS: That is right.

Q: It is certainly a very dynamic country, both on the economic and political side.

ROGERS: One other thing I would like to mention. By 1982 there was concern by the United States about what was happening to Mexico and also in other developing countries, but especially in Mexico. I give credit to the Reagan administration for trying to develop a set of measures that could help Mexico out of this. Ironically one of those measures was to contract with Mexico for a certain amount of oil to be put into our strategic petroleum reserve. So in a very brief time, say 1980-82, there had been a kind of ironic flip-flop in the oil relationship where we were using oil to help Mexico instead of being a threat to Mexico.

Q: Okay, so in 1982 you completed your assignment in Mexico City and came back to Washington again and I believe you were an instructor in economic matters at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces where you had been a student a few years earlier. We talked a bit before about ICAF and its role. Do you have anything particularly to say about the second experience?

ROGERS: It was interesting to be able to observe the Industrial College from the point of view of the faculty and staff. I took a delight in the title of professor which I must admit was granted, as far as I could tell, without tremendous thought, but I accepted it for what it was worth and enjoyed it.

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There were several aspects of this tour. It took me back to the roots of economics. I was teaching basic economics, which, of course, required that I go back and review a good deal of basic economics and find out how the academics had developed their views on basic macro and micro economics. And that was a lot of fun. I found teaching is not easy. After a couple of classes I was really quite drained. But it was exciting and the students were a good, serious bunch. But teaching 40 year old colonels basic economics was not the easiest job. But also it was the matter of interacting with the State Department students. We always had three or four there.

I did quite a bit in ICAF's foreign programs, that is, overseas travel, and interaction with the Inter-American Defense College, which is also on the same campus. We set up something called Operacion Amistad to try to get students between the two organizations to interact.

Q: The last year you were there you held the title of International Affairs Advisor, so I assume you were kind of the senior State Department representative on the administration.

ROGERS: That's right.

Q: Did you continue to teach?

ROGERS: I taught some. I taught a course in economic development. I succeeded Bill Wolle in that job and continued more so in being involved in the international aspects of ICAF.

Q: I assume in both capacity, as professor and international affairs advisor, you did counseling for the State Department students, but also for those from the Defense Department and other agencies.

ROGERS: Yes.

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Q: Okay, then after that you spent a year as senior policy advisor with the Bureau of Oceans and Environmental and Scientific Affairs. That certainly ranks right up there with titles.

ROGERS: Well, again...

Q: Tell me what you did.

ROGERS: I was without an assignment when I left ICAF and didn't feel I should stay there a fourth year, so I went over to the Department to see where I could be useful. It happened to be at a time when then Rep. Manuel Lujan, had inserted with the Congress' permission a clause in legislation that required a serious study of scientific and technological cooperation between the United States and Latin America. OES took me on for the purpose of preparing that report. That took me about six or seven months to write with a lot of help from other people and a certain amount of travel and consultation in Latin America, as well as some discussion with Rep. Lujan as to just what he was looking for. The report was submitted and published. That was kind of fun. I am not basically an academic, but it was fun to do that amount of research and a lot of writing.

The other project that I was involved in during the period was preparing part of the annual report on international scientific and technical cooperation that the Congress requires. That is worldwide and I wrote a couple of chapters of that and oversaw some other parts of it.

Q: As far as your report on the Latin American aspect, were you in favor of increased interaction?

ROGERS: You know, Ray, the problem there is translating not just good intentions but real policy objectives into concrete projects and programs. You look around to find ways in which there is the time and the money and the impetus on our side to get involved in projects with the Latin Americans and it is not easy to identify them. Many things happen on their own and, of course, we made the most of those in our report. But to find new

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initiatives from our policy objective position, but without the program need that the different agencies, the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Administration and all the rest, was not easy. Nevertheless, we came up with some ideas that could be pursued.

Q: It is easy to suggest new ideas, new ways of doing things, the hard part is coming up with the resources and the means to do it.

ROGERS: Well, as we are in the State Department rightly admonished for, we are not too bad with coming up with ways to use other agencies' money and other resources. That is nothing to be embarrassed about, but it has to be done in a certain way.

Q: And sometimes the other agencies, at least the staff, very much welcomes that because they realize what needs to be done, what could be done, if they only...

ROGERS: And, of course, we were looking for their ideas at that stage.

Q: Okay, Steve, you left OES in 1986 and went overseas. Tell me about that.

ROGERS: Well, I hadn't had much experience in Africa, although I had touched a little bit on it, and when I got a call asking if I would be interested in going to Pretoria, my first reaction was one of surprise. Then when I thought about it, it was a time when there was increasing interest in South Africa and it was something new and built on my economic background in a different way, so I said, "That sounds fine."

Q: What exactly was the job?

ROGERS: Well, it had two aspects to it—Counselor for Economic Affairs but also the officer in charge. In Pretoria, where the bulk of the embassy was, the ambassador and the deputy chief of mission were there typically for about half the year and the other half of the year they were in Cape Town during the parliamentary session, South Africa having three capitals. One is judicial, Bloemfontein, and didn't figure in this. A large number of people

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and all the top leaders of government and ambassadors made the trek at least twice a year between Pretoria and Cape Town as the parliamentary sessions required. Twice there were extraordinary sessions, so the ambassador and deputy chief of mission went to Cape Town other than at the usual time.

Q: Who were the ambassador and DCM when you first went to Pretoria?

ROGERS: Herman Nickel was ambassador when I got there and, of course, he represented the policy of constructive engagement with the South African government, which I continue to think had some reasonable validity and some reasonable chance of success. It was at a time when P.W. Botha was Prime Minister and then President of South Africa. He, in his early years accepted more momentum towards liberalizing racial relations and breaking down the apartheid system and this was encouraging. Unfortunately that process pretty much stopped. I think President Botha worked it up to a certain point and it ran out on him. That was the end as far as he was concerned. So that was a time of considerable frustration for the United States, Britain and other countries that were interested in change, and obviously for Ambassador Nickel.

About two months after I got to Pretoria and right at the end of Ambassador Nickel's assignment there, Congress passed, over President Reagan's veto, the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986. I guess that was about October 4, 1986. Of course, the South Africans had recognized the threat of sanctions and there were other types of sanctions that had been in place, but nothing had happened with quite the publicity, the flare, the political force that the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act of 1986 had. So that had quite an impact on us in the embassy and our relations with the South African government and our relations with the majority of the South African people, and that became a dominant factor in our relationship for the next several years.

Q: Was that impact of the sanctions, the US legislation, primarily political, or did it have a significant economic impact in terms of investment or trade?

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ROGERS: That is a good question. Somebody is going to have to write a definitive study of this at some point and it will be interesting to see what the conclusions are. My own belief is that the principal impact of the Act was political and psychological, rather than economic. I mean there were other factors at work that were having more of an economic impact than the 1986 Act. We had restrictions on IMF loans to South Africa, which weren't necessary in themselves but could have been an important factor in supporting other borrowing that the government might have wanted to undertake in developed countries. And, perhaps, as far as investment is concerned, I think most observers would agree that the more important factor was the tremendous number of state and local actions against those who invested in South Africa. They were of different forms. Pension funds couldn't invest in some cases connected to city employees, etc.

Q: Those restrictions were on the investment of money in American companies who were doing business in South Africa. It wasn't necessarily funds being invested directly to South Africa.

ROGERS: No, that is correct. Or another typical form, I think, was that a company with an investment in South Africa had a harder time getting a contract with a state or city government in the United States. They would have to overcome a certain barrier which might be five or ten percent cost, or something like that. And this sort of thing led to the removal of more than half of the US companies that had been in South Africa.

Q: The typical economic and commercial counselor in an American embassy has kind of a dual responsibility. On the one hand he does reporting, analysis, assesses the implications of various actions, and on the other hand is promoting the trade and commerce and investment and trying to overcome difficulties and problems, etc. I assume in the case of Pretoria that you would pretty much do the first, looking at the analysis of sanctions, the effect of apartheid, etc. rather than promoting trade or investment.

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ROGERS: We certainly weren't promoting trade or investment. That was not any significant part of our activities, investment not at all and trade very little. We did follow and try to assist the activities of some American companies that were there to deal with the situation that they found themselves with. A famous case was that of Ford Motor Company, which had a joint venture with Anglo-American or a subsidiary of Anglo-American, in producing Fords and other cars in South Africa. They made the decision that they had to withdraw so the question was what would happen to their perhaps 40 percent in this company, SAMCOR, which was their joint venture. They tried to do this in quite an innovative way by giving the majority of their share to the union of workers at SAMCOR. Well, that was not so easy to set up or to do, but eventually they did accomplish it and Ford withdrew, although they were still selling parts because Fords were still being built in South Africa, but without any direct investment from Ford Motor Company. There were a few things like that and we did interact with American businessmen, but it was not in the same promotional way as elsewhere.

Q: I would like to talk a little bit about this function of officer-in-charge when the parliament was in session in Cape Town. Other than, in the absence of the ambassador and DCM, managing the embassy, were there elements of the South African government still in Pretoria that you would make representations to, make demarches to?

ROGERS: Oh, yes. It is just the top officials, the ministers and their immediate staffs, who would go to Cape Town. The ministers were members of parliament, of course, so they had to be there and their deputy ministers to some extent. But the top civil servants tended to stay in Pretoria, along with their staffs. So at that level, things sort of continued as normal.

Q: I know that during the period of Ambassador Bill Swing, he tried very hard to straddle this divide and spend part of the week in Pretoria even during the parliamentary session

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and part of the time in Cape Town. It wasn't done, I guess, during the period you were there. They pretty much went away did they?

ROGERS: Most of the time I was there, Ed Perkins was the ambassador and he went to Cape Town and he would come to Pretoria; it is easy enough to go back and forth. I would sometimes go to Cape Town and he would some times come to Pretoria for one reason or another. But Bill did try to do that more. There was always the question of how to handle this situation. The inspectors came and gave their recommendation and, of course, we criticized their recommendations, but it was basically a difficult and ultimately impossible dilemma, and we just had to deal with it as well as we could. That meant I was on the phone a good deal with the DCM in Cape Town. It was important that I find out what the ambassador and he or she wanted and how to handle certain issues. But we got along.

Q: It was certainly important for them to know what you were doing and since the bulk of the staff of the mission continued to be in Pretoria, much of the every day work of the mission was done there.

ROGERS: Precisely.

Q: I would like to talk a little more about certain policy environment. If you come back to the United States side we had the elections of 1988 in which President Bush was elected; sanctions continued to be in effect; the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act was still the law of the land. Was there much change that took place at that point on our side or were we pretty much just reacting to some changes that were taking place as far as the nearing end of apartheid on the South African side?

ROGERS: Of course, we didn't know we were nearing the end of apartheid. In fact, for the first two years I was there, and well into the third year, I think the general feeling was one of pessimism in the embassy. There would be little things that would happen, there were differences in social contacts and that sort of thing. We certainly tried to contribute to them. Ed Perkins made a very serious effort to get closer to the black leadership and get

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to know them and develop a sense of confidence on their part about what US intentions were. It was done fairly quietly. This wasn't sticking a finger in the eye of the South African government to a very great extent, but it was effectively developing links with the country as a whole and de-emphasizing direct contact, more limited contact, with the South African government than had characterized the period of constructive engagement. That had some effect, I think.

Q: Was that something he did pretty much himself, or did he encourage you, as the economic counselor and perhaps others in the embassy, also to develop contacts with the black leadership?

ROGERS: That was clearly embassy policy to be followed across the board. In my time we always had a member of my economic section who spent full time on interacting with black economic institutions. Trying to get to know them and analyze where they were and help them to some extent. We developed in that time—the administrative section developed—a policy of trying to emphasize black companies as suppliers to the embassy. My people cooperated in trying to put that list of potential suppliers together. So that was there and was intensified. We tried in our social engagements to mix up blacks and whites, and that was quite fascinating. We would have a dinner, for instance, and perhaps have ten people around the table, including one or two black couples and one or two Afrikaner couples, or have a reception with a mixed guest list of the same sort, and find that these people who had hardly ever interacted on the basis of social equality on neutral ground, interacting some times quite vigorously over the dinner table. Sometimes there would be quite pointed exchanges and both sides seemed to enjoy it immensely. That was one thing that gave you some hope, that kind of reaction.

Q: The American embassy was doing this and certainly it was a great achievement. Were other embassies doing it? Were there other opportunities for blacks and Afrikaners to come together?

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ROGERS: I couldn't swear to it. I suspect that we did it more than others did. The change had started before I got there, significantly in some respects, but even when I got there, the adventure of our church, the Congregational Church, making a kind of an annual pilgrimage to a black church with which it was associated in the Northern Transvaal, quite isolated, was a major thing, to have that kind of contact.

Q: This was a South African congregation that you attended, it wasn't part of the American community?

ROGERS: Oh, no, we were the only Americans there. In fact, the congregation was part of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, which in total was 80 - 85 percent non-white. So the total context was one of integration, but individual congregations were either black, colored or white. That was just a fact of life regardless of what people wanted. The interaction between congregations of different parts of the community were the interesting things.

Q: South Africa is a very large, complex country. We had consulates at that time and, of course, still do in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Durban. Did you have a chance to travel widely around the country? How did you interact with the consulates?

ROGERS: Well, I visited all three consulates from time to time. Johannesburg often, of course, because it is the economic capital of South Africa and we have a large and very competent consulate there with many activities. The labor attach# was there, for instance, and the commercial attach# was there. So my staff and I had a lot of contact with them. I visited Durban two or three times and Cape Town quite a number of times to interact also with them. We saw a lot of South Africa.

Q: Did you have the chance to travel to other parts of southern Africa? Was there much sense of connection between South Africa and the rest of the continent? Certainly the rest

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of the continent, from my experience, was extremely interested in what was happening in South Africa and paying very close attention to it throughout this period.

ROGERS: All the neighboring countries, of course, had this conflict in their own minds, recognizing that South Africa was by far the dominant economy of the region and yet wanting to put pressure on and distance themselves from South Africa for very understandable political reasons. Zimbabwe was perhaps a prime example, where President Mugabe has always been outspoken in his opposition and his wish to put pressure on South Africa, and yet trade between Zimbabwe and South Africa increased to Zimbabwe's considerable advantage, to its manufacturing sector in particular. It was difficult for those countries.

Q: I went to Ghana in 1989 and at that time Ghana Airways had a weekly flight in a DC 10 to Harare, which was explained to me partly because there were some special connections between Zimbabwe and Ghana, including the fact that President Mugabe's late wife was a Ghanaian and there were quite a few Ghanaians working there, etc. But I think far more important was that Harare was seen as a way station to South Africa and the rest of southern Africa. So it was not necessarily a commercial proposition, but it was one looking to the future and a political reason for being there.

ROGERS: That is very interesting and makes concrete something that Foreign Minister Pik Botha mentioned frequently and with some enthusiasm, that South Africa had economic relations with all but one African country. These relations were not advertised specifically and not generally by the countries other than South Africa, for good political reasons. But they were there.

Q: Did you get involved at all in issues like Angola and Namibia and Mozambique, or were those pretty much handled by other sections in the mission?

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ROGERS: Pretty much by others in the mission, yes. These were factors in the thinking for all of us and part of the context for all of us.

Q: You left in 1990. What was the atmosphere like at that time compared to four years earlier when you arrived? Had much changed or was it still to come in the future?

ROGERS: We, of course, always tried to see how things were developing, to look into the future and see how things might go. About the middle of my tour in South Africa, we gave a little more attention to this and developed the usual three scenarios of what might happen, and they were really three degrees of disaster that we came up with. There was no sign of what was to take place just a few months after that. In fact, while we could see the pressures building and we could see some response to these pressures through time, the movement was so slight. We could find examples of progress, but it was the old question of which end of the tube are you looking through. You can look through one end and see that things are moving rapidly from that end, but you look at it through the other end of the tube you can't determine any movement because it is so far away. Well, things were happening but not to satisfaction of anyone in the majority black population. But there were some developments that were completely fortuitous. P.W. Botha's stroke for instance. Also certain developments in the schedule of elections that seemed to be important as things worked out. So, we were quite astonished to see the changes that took place in 1989 with F.W. de Klerk becoming head of the party and then President. In his speech on February 2, 1990 he announced that Nelson Mandela would be released and the ANC and other subversive organizations would be allowed to operate inside South Africa, and the process started that led to the change of government on May 10 of this year. [1994]

Q: The speech by de Klerk of February 1990 was when you were still there; however, the release of Nelson Mandela came after you left.

ROGERS: No, no, it was a couple of weeks after the speech.

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Q: So, while you were still there it radically changed?

ROGERS: They radically changed. It was just astonishing the change that took place in that last year that I was there.

Q: To come back to the American side, the anti-apartheid sanctions continued to be in effect though for a while. In the last few months that you were there, did you see much sign on the American business side of new possibilities starting to take an interest, or was that later?

ROGERS: That sort of thing took time for a variety of reasons. One is that the state and local restrictions were still in effect, which inhibited some companies from even staying in South Africa, much less increasing or starting new investments in South Africa. In fact, if I recall correctly the city of New York was still imposing new sanctions in 1990, which seemed way out of line with the trend of things, but that happened. So, those sanctions were still an obstacle to any investment. But people began showing interest in coming and that was good. But it is a slow process to redevelop interest in a market for most companies and industries, I think.

Q: You were there under three ambassador; Herman Nickel, Ed Perkins and then Bill Swing. Each obviously had a different style, different approach, and was dealing with a revolving situation. I guess I am interested in the embassy's relationship with Washington. Did you feel that Washington recognized these changes or was the attitude in Washington still very hesitant, restrictive?

ROGERS: In the period I was there, there was no inclination on the part of the embassy to try to change the basic relationship. It was still waiting to see if all this promise that was there would really lead to the negotiation of a solution to the problem. It took three or four more years to accomplish. So, I don't think that it really was an occasion for a change of policy to be recommended. We became more open and more active in our relationships

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with the black sector of the community. Certainly Bill Swing built on what Ed Perkins had done and did it in a more public fashion, made more of a thing of it. It was presumably the right time to be doing that. We had had an AID program even when I arrived in 1986, a rather small AID program with one or two AID officials, to try to help black business and education and leadership development. That program expanded quite a bit and we set up a full-fledged AID mission with the unique aspect that it had no relationship with the South African government, almost unique in AID experience. So that expanded considerably up to a \$40 million a year program, I think it was by the time I left.

Q: When you first got there, was the AID operation part of the economic section?

ROGERS: My predecessor had a lot to do with that. By the time I got there, there was an AID person there and the staff was being developed. I had interest and some involvement in it, but it was directed more in the way of a traditional AID program.

Q: I seem to remember during this period there was a lot of debate and discussion about the African National Conference, the ANC, in terms of its economic policies if it ever came to power—whether it would be communist, what it saw as the role of the private market. Was that an issue of interest to you at the time and did you have contact with ANC people on the economic policy side?

ROGERS: We certainly did. It was of interest and we did have such contacts. Not long before he was released, Nelson Mandela in an interview reiterated the kind of statements that had given concern in the past about nationalizing industries and that sort of thing, which was a little bit discouraging. But, you know, a process began and it continued through a lot of very constructive, I think, interaction between white business and black business in South Africa and between academics of different points of view, which has led to the situation we have today. I don't know that there has been any nationalization or talk of immediate nationalization. Certainly the ANC is committed to a basically market economy approach to development with a very large role for private enterprise.

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Q: During the period that you were there, Steve, were there quite a few American visitors, members of Congress, staff members or members of the American academic community coming through?

ROGERS: There was a lot of interest and many visits. I guess there have been a lot more since, particularly at the time of the change of government and all. Yes, we had study groups coming through and we talked to them. I remember spending quite a bit of time with Senator Simon and others.

Q: Well, you were there certainly during a watershed period. The last year things really did happen quickly. Was there anything else you would like to mention during your tour in Pretoria?

ROGERS: Yes. I think what we began to see then and saw still more in the ensuing three years which I watched from Swaziland, what students might in future years analyze as kind of classic development of a new consensus in a country. Not a complete consensus, by any means, but a large measure of agreement as to what South Africa should be and where it should go. The general lines of that. And considering where the different parties were coming from, that is quite a remarkable event.

Q: And that consensus across the political spectrum does, of course, leave out those extreme fringes on both sides.

ROGERS: Yes, of course, there are always going to be people outside the sort of bell curve of opinion in something like that. But the extreme right discredited itself so thoroughly in the Bophuthatswana incident last year. The extreme at the other end seems to have been sort of brought along for the most part. Developing a consensus through this process was a difficult matter with a lot of violence. It was so sad, the number of people who were killed in the process. But through it all the leadership of the main parties maintained a sense of an objective and through time developed a kind of momentum

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which led to continuation or sometimes resumption of negotiations despite pretty horrible examples of oppression and reaction and all.

Q: Most observers seem to give Nelson Mandela and de Klerk credit for that primarily, that finding of a common ground. Is that your opinion?

ROGERS: South Africa is certainly blessed with extraordinary leadership and that is a good thing, and those two men in particular, although it couldn't be limited to them. I think there are other factors that are perhaps deep in the various psyches of South Africans, if that is the right term. People talk about South Africa being a violent country and there is a lot of basis for that, but when you look at the characteristics of different parts of the population, the Afrikaners are most hospitable people, and we always found that even with the most conservative of them, with very few exceptions, they wanted to talk about their ideas, their situation and their interests. You go to the black community and you find despite all this experience of oppression, apartheid, increasing separation of the races, especially after 1948, that in spite of that I found almost no sign that the blacks had become racist. That is quite a surprising development, I would think. Sure, there was some bitterness and all that, but you didn't have the feeling that the blacks were out to destroy the whites. The most you could say was that there were black consciousness people who wanted to set the whites aside until blacks had developed their own socio-economic structures and then invite them back in to participate on an equal basis, but even that was a minor part of the black thinking. So, with some underlying positive factors there was the possibility of this extraordinary leadership to develop a consensus of a non-racist South Africa.

Q: You had a very optimistic view of South Africa at the time you left, is that accurate?

ROGERS: I am optimistic in terms of a long run evolution of South Africa and southern Africa. I wouldn't want that to be misunderstood. In fact, I think the important thing for us as observers from the United States now is to recognize that while the momentum is

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there and the consensus has been developed to a certain point, there are an awful lot of problems and there will be strains and we can still expect some violence. I am sure that we will hear things from South Africa that we won't like. There will be policies of the new government that we will think are counterproductive and we will find conflicts in our interests with theirs from time to time. So there are going to be occasions when people can say that it looks as if things are going in the wrong direction or that the changes failed, etc. But we need to keep in mind the underlying trends and the fact that tremendous progress has been made and that there is a kind of consensus, I believe. I hope I am right about that.

Q: On the economic side there are enormous disparities I think between those living in squalor, poverty in the townships and those that have been able to be educated and done well. So I see that as an area for change.

ROGERS: There are tremendous disparities in housing, education, and employment. There are so many unemployed blacks, especially young people, who are perhaps susceptible to leadership and unconstructive direction. It is going to take a long time to overcome this, but if the new government can improve things and then continue a sense of step-by-step progress on the economic side, I think that the fact that there remain great disparities will not be as important. The disparities will become very serious if there is no sense that something is being done, even if at a pretty modest pace, to overcome that.

Q: Well, in 1990 you completed your four years in South Africa, came back to Washington and then returned to the neighborhood as Ambassador to Swaziland. Could you tell me how that came about and a little bit about what your responsibilities and duties were there?

ROGERS: Mary Ryan, who was my predecessor, had been there a year and a half when she was called back to Washington to be the principal deputy to the Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs, which left a vacancy. I happened to be well situated having had the experience in Pretoria, and the interest and knowledge of South Africa, which is very much

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the context for Swaziland. I was very pleased to be asked and to accept appointment as ambassador to Swaziland.

Q: You were nominated when?

ROGERS: It was a long process. From the time we began to discuss this, which was November, 1989 when I happened to be in Washington, to the time I actually got there was just short of a year, November 12, 1990. It was the usual long process. I got the agreement, I guess, in April, and it was announced soon afterwards. I had the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing and then it moved fairly fast, but with all the clearances it just took a long, long time.

Q: Could you say something about the embassy in Swaziland? You will have to tell me the name of the capital.

ROGERS: The capital is Mbabane.

Q: How big was the staff when you were there?

ROGERS: It depends how you count it because we had maybe a dozen State Department Americans there, but we had FSNs and other agencies. We had a substantial AID mission. We had USIS operation of about ten people, one American and the rest Swazis. We had a Peace Corps contingent of 70 volunteers with perhaps 20 staff. We have a Bureau of the Foreign Broadcast Information Service. Then with all the contract people and everyone like that, I think you could come up to 250 who were responsible to the embassy directly or indirectly.

Q: All those people were involved with US programs in Swaziland?

ROGERS: Well, essentially all, although we had some regional responsibilities. Several people in AID had regional responsibilities for aspects of AID operations in Mozambique,

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South Africa, and Lesotho and maybe one or two other countries, and the FBIS bureau covered several countries.

Q: What was the general climate of US relations with Swaziland?

ROGERS: I think the relationship was quite good. We had our ups and downs because of one or two things I will mention. The government is two parallel types: the king is very much the king of Swaziland. He and his mother, the queen mother, are the co-monarchs of Swaziland. This is serious. He has a structure of advisors and the royal family and chiefs and other traditional figures who remain important to the Swazis' sense of unity and of organization and to their ability to get things done. The king also appoints the prime minister. There is a two-house parliament with one house elected. There is a cabinet with the usual ministries.

Q: Are there political parties?

ROGERS: Officially there are no political parties at all in Swaziland and that is an issue. That is something they are going to have to deal with, but in due course that will come.

Q: And the population?

ROGERS: The population is something under a million.

Q: What sort of things were we doing?

ROGERS: They included agricultural, educational, and small business. The Peace Corps and AID were getting more into environmental issues. Peace Corps volunteers were mostly teachers in high schools. They were spread all over the country. One of the great things about being the ambassador there was that I had a reason to go visit these volunteers and that was the basis for seeing practically all corners of the country. That was great fun.

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Q: They were teaching science, mathematics or...?

ROGERS: Yes, science and math and to some extent vocational subjects.

Q: You mention that relations were generally good but you had some ups and downs.

ROGERS: Well, the relationship was good. US national interests are not heavily involved in Swaziland. That is fairly obvious. Swaziland is important to us and we have a certain amount of investment and trade, but these are not very large figures. It is important to us that the Swazis understand our votes in international organizations where we both have seats, the UN organization for instance. So there are things like that that are important to us. Swaziland's position of being almost surrounded by South Africa, but also with a border with Mozambique, gives it a kind of strategic position which is important for watching what goes on around and for sharing views and information on relations with South Africa and Mozambique and elsewhere in the African continent, because Swaziland has had some leadership roles in African organizations.

Aside from these things, our principal concerns while I was there were the political development and economic development of Swaziland. The AID program and the Peace Corps, of course, were related mostly to the economic development of Swaziland. But we also felt that in accordance with US policy towards Africa we needed to pay a good deal of attention to the human rights and democratization aspects of political development in Swaziland. This was coming along. The king, when I presented my credentials, told me about his plan to set up a commission to consult with the people of Swaziland on what political changes they would like to have take place. And, indeed, this process did take place and the answer was, and I think it was legitimately determined, that the people wanted to elect at least the Lower House of parliament, the House of Assembly. And that election did take place a month or two before I left three years later. It happened in a Swazi way and at a Swazi pace, but that was all right, the progress was there.

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On the human rights side I got rather a quick introduction to the problem. Two days after I arrived there was a demonstration on the campus of the University of Swaziland. I think it was not much more than the thing that college students tend to do. They had some complaints and they demonstrated. But the response to this got out of hand and it became rather violent with both the police and the military involved. A number of students were injured, one seriously. I don't think anyone was killed, although there were claims of that happening. The government opted to try to crack down on the people they thought were the leaders of this group. Two of those leaders came to the embassy the next morning, three days after I had arrived, looking for asylum. Well, asylum wasn't appropriate and wasn't feasible. The terminology was wrong and there was no reason for us to give protection. Their lives were not in danger. So we didn't feel we could keep them, but it did take a couple of days to work this out, talking with the Swazi government, with Washington and the two fellows themselves. We ushered them out of the embassy early on a Saturday morning.

Q: But they did stay for a few days?

ROGERS: They stayed two days.

Q: All of this was before you presented credentials?

ROGERS: Well, they came in on Thursday morning and I presented my credentials on Thursday afternoon, having had a quick visit with the prime minister before then to discuss this issue. It was not an issue in my discussion with the king, but it was certainly on his mind and was on my mind. These two men left Swaziland and went to South Africa, but then South Africa returned them about two days later and they were immediately picked up by the police at that point and detained. Swaziland at that point had a provision that allowed the prime minister to issue an order of detention for 60 days without charges. We had made it known long before that we didn't think this was proper from a human rights standpoint, especially since the 60 days could be renewed for another 60 days continually.

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Q: Did that happen?

ROGERS: Yes, that happened in this case. There were three or four other leaders who had not come to the embassy or left the country who were also detained.

Q: So the concern for us both in the context of our overall respect and human rights policy, but also the particular instance where they had actually come to the American embassy.

ROGERS: It was basically the principle, but having had the experience with these two young men added an edge, at least, to our policy on the subject and our expression of the policy.

Q: When you say the embassy in this case, do you mean the office building, the chancery or do you mean your residence?

ROGERS: No, it was the chancery. We had them for almost 48 hours in the anteroom outside the consular and administrative area and there were no facilities. This was not easy to handle. We allowed them to be fed by relatives who brought food for them. Otherwise it was pretty difficult.

Q: I gather that access to senior government people. The prime minister, ministers, was pretty easy for you, is that right? Were there other embassies in Mbabane?

ROGERS: Yes. The British have a high commission there. Mozambique has an embassy. I must say that the Mozambique ambassador became a good friend and a colleague with a very constructive role in Swaziland. The Mozambicans I think provided good counsel to Swaziland. The president met with the king and their conversations were good and encouraged the right kind of developments from our point of view in Swaziland and the right kind of relations with Mozambique.

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Q: Did the king, or prime minister, or other Swazi leaders have an impact also the other way in terms of developments in Mozambique?

ROGERS: They were certainly very interested in what happened in Mozambique and until 1992, of course, there was a great deal of violence, the war was on. I don't recall the exact date of the agreement, but since that point it had been quite quiet. The Swazis recognize the importance of that to them. The shortest rail route to the sea is from Swaziland to Maputo. That has hardly been used because of the violence and the losses on the way and particularly in Maputo port.

Q: The rebel movement in Mozambique was Renamo and at one point it certainly had support from South Africa. Was Swaziland involved with that at all?

ROGERS: I think the Swazis tried to stay out of that. There may have been contacts on occasion, but basically the Swazis very wisely did not, at least in my knowledge, try to influence developments other than encouraging movements towards peace.

A couple of things I would like to go back to. One, just for the record, you asked about other embassies. It is an interesting small collection of diplomatic missions there. In addition to the British and the Mozambicans, the Taiwan Chinese have an embassy there. Korea had an embassy while I was there headed by a charg# d'affaires, but it has since been closed. Israel has an embassy in Swaziland. The European Community has a mission there. South Africa had a trade mission which has just in the last few months been upgraded to an embassy. And then there was a set of UN agencies, four or five, there. Those plus honorary consuls, about seven or eight, and a representative of the German embassy in Mozambique, constituted the diplomatic corps very broadly defined, perhaps 19 or 20 people.

Q: Suggestions are made some times that the United States, essentially for cost cutting reasons, ought to eliminate some of the resident embassies that we have in very small

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countries and handle relations on a regional basis where the ambassador would rove around. How would you feel about that after being ambassador in a small country like Swaziland?

ROGERS: Swaziland would be a candidate for that sort of thing, you can't deny that, if we decided to move significantly away from a policy of having permanent diplomatic resident representation in every African country. Mennen Williams, as Assistant Secretary for African Affairs, established that policy when Kennedy was President, at the time that so many of these countries were becoming independent. In fact, for the first several years the ambassador to Swaziland was resident in Botswana. So we could return to something like that. Obviously, I would regret that. I think we have a role there. I think we have a role in every African country. Specifically in Swaziland? Well I can't cite fundamental US interests that would be seriously jeopardized, but I think we have an opportunity to, and I think we do, encourage what is an African country that works. I noticed the Washington Post used that term with Zimbabwe the other day—Zimbabwe works, and it does. We hear so much about African countries that don't work and Swaziland works well. It works better than Zimbabwe, incidentally, but on a smaller scale. I think we can continue to encourage this economic and political development that we have been encouraging, and I think it is worthwhile in the overall context of Africa.

I might return to a point we were discussing—the detention without charges matter—that we raised as an example. Those five or six people, plus one prince who had gotten on the wrong side of things and had been in detention for a few years, finally were released a little over four months after the incident at the chancery. There were a lot of people in the government of Swaziland who didn't like that provision of detention and there were pressures...one of the fellows went on a hunger strike which had an effect. The Swazis also recognized that the United States, Britain and others felt that this was unsuitable for a country like Swaziland, or any country. So they were released. For the rest of my time in Swaziland and to date there have been no detainees without charges. In fact, last year the king abolished the provision that allowed detention without charges. Well, that kind

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of thing occurs because of internal pressures rather than external pressures, but we can encourage it by being there in a way that we couldn't otherwise.

There were other human rights and political issues which we took up in our human rights report, in our chapter of the report now on 179 countries which is sent to the Congress every year. We listed these and made a lot of use of that chapter—12 or 13 pages on Swaziland. We distributed it quite widely. One year the chapter on Swaziland was published in its entirety in the major daily paper in Swaziland. In fact, it was translated and also published in the Swazi edition of the same paper. People have shown interest in these reports. Their interest is in how the world sees them.

After all that, I have to say that the human rights situation in Swaziland is quite good. The government, both traditional and modern forms, treats the people quite well. There are always complaints and complaints of oppression...I remember I was making a speech one time and in the question period one fellow, who became a good friend of mine, stood up and made a long speech as to how there was no freedom of speech in Swaziland. Well, obviously he was disproving his own point by making the speech and getting away with it. He was never detained. So the situation is quite good but there are things that need to be dealt with and we are in a position to encourage that process.

Q: How to conduct the human rights aspect of our foreign policy is always somewhat controversial. Obviously each situation differs somewhat. There is a suggestion that in some cases it may be counter productive by applying pressure and getting just the opposite of what we seek. Nationalism may take over and people dig in their heels and say, "It is none of your business, we are going to deal with it ourselves." And, in fact, the person may wind up being detained longer than otherwise would have been the case. I assume that wasn't what happened in this case.

ROGERS: No, it wasn't. We tailored the policy according to the situation. The situation being that the instinct was there to move along both on human rights and on

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democratization. The king had discussed it in public and had set up these mechanisms to move in the direction of democratization. So it was only rarely that we were in a position of challenging or criticizing the government. We were clear in our positions, in the descriptions in the chapter on human rights, for instance. But for the most part, and particularly on the political change, I was very happy in public to say how pleased we were with certain steps that had been taken and how we were looking forward to the next steps which had been announced and promised and would be taking place. I continued that approach until the end of my time there, and I hope it was useful in encouraging the country to move in the right direction.

Q: You thoroughly enjoyed your period there?

ROGERS: Oh, absolutely. The Swazis are wonderful people. They are friendly, very nice, interesting and very African. Swaziland in some respects I think has respected the African traditions and philosophies in a way that I doubt that you find with the same kind of purity in most other African countries. It is a homogeneous country, they are all Swazis, they all feel like Swazis. There is no thought that anyone wants to break off or become part of South Africa, or anything like that. That just doesn't come up. Or that they shouldn't be a monarchy or shouldn't respect the king and queen mother and all. I mean these questions don't come up because this is a nation of Swazis. Perhaps five percent are not black, either white or mixed race. But the Swazi culture is very firm and they are proud of their traditions. They have long stories of their families and clans, etc.

Q: Certainly in economic matters they are dominated by South Africa, but they feel very independent.

ROGERS: They feel their Swaziness very strongly. There is no question about that. They feel their sovereignty. They recognize that being in a customs union with South Africa is a limitation on their freedom of action on economic matters. The Swazi currency, the lilangeni, is dependent on the rand. They are equal and flow back and forth very easily.

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The rand easily circulates within Swaziland, although the lilangeni does not circulate in South Africa. And that is a great benefit to Swaziland. So they know that they are dependent on South Africa for their prosperity. Incidentally, by sub-Saharan African standards, they are a prosperous country. But this is dependent on their relationship with South Africa to a significant extent.

Q: Well, Steve, I think we need to stop at this point. I thank you very much for doing this interview. We will look forward to talking to you some more.

ROGERS: It has been a great pleasure, thank you.

End of interview